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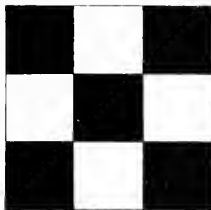
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# Athens Quilts: You Start with a Nine-Patch

1

In *Grandmother Brown's Hundred Years, 1828-1927*, Maria Foster Brown recounts events of her childhood in Athens in the early 19th century.

*When I was six years old [1833] I had pieced a patchwork quilt. Sister Libbie had made two. There were nine pieces in each patch. We sewed the pieces together with tiny over and over stitches after Grandma had cut them and basted them for us. If we took our stitches too deep, we had to pick them out.<sup>1</sup>*

Her teacher, Grandma Foster, a native of Massachusetts, moved to Vermont in 1789, after her marriage to Zadoc Foster. The family then moved to the Northwest Territory, settling in Belpre, Ohio, in 1797 and moving to Athens in 1809.

Throughout Athens County in 1976 women still piece and applique patterns that would have been well-known to Grandma Foster and the other pioneer women who brought the quilting tradition with them to the Ohio lands. Over and over, today's quilters repeat Mrs. Brown's story of initiation into quilting by way of the simple nine-patch block.

In the last few years, along with the heightened interest in the traditional folk arts has come a sophisticated new element in quilting, as contemporary artist-craftsmen have begun to look at quilts as large canvases on which to express in a tactile as well as visual way their interest in the problems of form, color, and line.

The old and the new strains differ greatly in the handling of color and pattern, the older women preferring pastels and cherishing such patterns as Dresden Plate, Flower Garden, and Double Wedding Ring. The artist-craftswoman, on the other hand, seeks intense color, creating vibrant optical effects

by Nancy Roe

PHOTOGRAPH BY SUSAN FANFANTON



Nancy Roe earned both a bachelor's and a master's degree from Ohio University. She was a part-time instructor in the English Department for many years and is now a news writer in the University's Office of Public Information. From observing auctions and sales in the region, she has concluded the area must be quite blanketed with quilts, and counts among her prized possessions a Court House Square quilt, an Ocean Waves, and a Lend and Borrow.

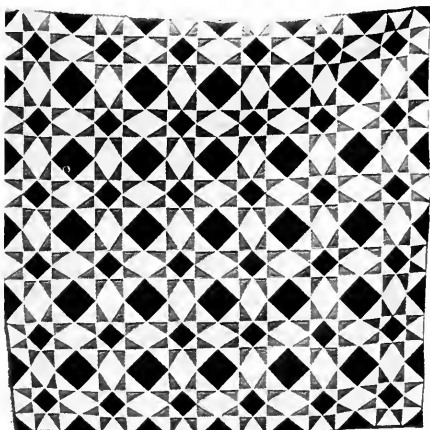
She looks forward to trying her hand at the art someday.



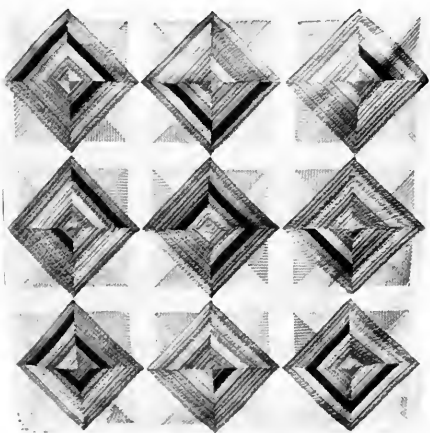
PHOTOGRAPH BY SUSAN FANFANTON

<sup>1</sup>Harriet Connor Brown, Boston, Little, Brown and Co., 1929, p. 47.

Storm at Sea pattern pieced by William Hoyt, husband of a former Textile Guild quilting group member.



Log Cabin pattern by Nancy Crow.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY NANCY CROW

and both adapting traditional designs and design elements and developing new ones.

What the two groups share are industriousness, respect for good workmanship, and a desire to create objects that combine beauty with utility and can be exhibited with pride by the maker.

Neatness, harmony, a sense of ordered existence—these are the qualities exhibited by the piecework of Mrs. Oscar Fulton which are for sale in the Trisolini Gallery Shop on the Ohio University campus. Mrs. Fulton has made over 50 piecework potholders in the traditional hexagon Flower Garden pattern. Each could serve as a quilt sampler and each takes six to seven hours to complete.

"My mother set me to piecing my first quilt—a simple nine-patch—when I was eight or nine," she recalled. "I can't tell you how many tops I have pieced or appliqued through the years. I am never without some project at hand."

At present two of her tops are out being quilted and she has the pieces cut for the next one. Out of curiosity she counted the pieces in her latest project, stacking them in piles of 100. She was astonished when they totaled over 1,100.

She noted that of the two large categories of American patchwork, piecing and applique, the latter is the more tedious. "You have to have pretty good eyes to do applique work—marking, cutting, and then snipping the edges and turning and basting them before placing the design on the top. You can't work at it steadily, the way you can with piecing."

Mrs. Fulton has an appreciative audience for her work in the members of her family. Her three children (all Ohio University graduates), seven grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren have many of her finished quilts. With pride she noted that one of the granddaughters "took the colors for the bedroom in her new home from the quilt I gave her."

Mrs. Fulton is a meticulous worker and has encountered difficulty in finding quilters whose work does justice to the care and skill her pieced tops display. One quilter who meets her standards is Mrs. Jack Stanley, who is currently quilting a Flower Garden for her.

The quilting frame in Mrs. Stanley's dining room came readymade from a local lumberyard in 1928 and is seldom put away. In 1975 alone she quilted 21 tops, four of which she had appliqued herself. For most of the total she had also supplied the dacron batting and the plain sheet backing that, added to the top, make up the layers of the quilt sandwich.

Like Mrs. Fulton, Mrs. Stanley began quilting as a girl, her mother teaching her how to make a nine-patch block. "My mother was a quilter, as all the old-timers were. They tried to outdo each other in the beauty of their work. I remember Mother using the material from our outgrown coats and piecing and embroidering it. It was beautiful."

Like her mother, and unlike many who choose either to piece or to quilt, Mrs. Stanley does both, often creating the quilting patterns herself. These vary from outlining the individual pieces to filling plain borders, blocks, and joining strips with elaborate feathers, ferns, wreaths, scrolls, stars, flowers, bows, and geometric figures.

The choice of patterns and colors is a personal matter, according to Mrs. Stanley. She uses both pastels and more



intense colors, the latter particularly on the appliqued quilts she finds modern buyers favor, adding, "The people crazy about antiques, though, they like the pieced ones."

On the top Mrs. Stanley is quilting for Mrs. Fulton, each of the more than 1,000 hexagons is being echoed within its borders by her stitches. Several bandage strips stand ready on the frames, testimony to the wear and tear the quilter's fingers suffer. "No quilter works without a thimble, and some use one on each hand," she noted. "The thumb underneath is used to make sure the needle is piercing all three layers, while the thumb on top helps hold and guide the needle."

For her, quilting is both a way of keeping busy and an income supplement. Since retiring she has finished well over 100 quilts, and as she turns the pages of a pattern book she catalogs her labors: "Oh, yes, I've made the Basket, the Little Beech Tree, and lots of Whirligigs and nine-patch variations, and a Double Wrench—only we called it Monkey Wrench. I've made several of the Fan and Dresden Plate. Applique, too. I've done Briar Rose, Martha's Vineyard—I could go on and on."

One finished quilt waiting to be picked up was pieced in blue and white six-star blocks by a mother from the uniforms her daughter wore during nurse's training. Mrs. Stanley noted that the material was tough and hard to quilt, but she understood the sentiment that went into the cutting and piecing. Pointing to a top with less than perfect workmanship, she said, "Sometimes the material, or the work, or the colors of the top someone brings me to quilt are such that you hardly think it's worth the work. Then you think about why the woman wanted it done. Maybe her mother or a relative now dead pieced it for her, or it has memories of some time or pieces of fabric that have sentimental value."

Like Mrs. Stanley, Mrs. William H. Allen began to make quilts in earnest after retirement, although she said she never really stopped making quilts while she worked.

At the 1975 Athens County Fair Mrs. Allen took a first prize for her Bear's Claws (or Duck's Foot in the Mud) quilt in a red, black, and yellow calico print appliqued on men's fine white shirting and a second prize for a dramatic snowflake appliqued in several shades of blue on white.

Mrs. Allen pieces and appliques because "I need something to do. My mother taught me, starting with a nine-patch. She pieced but did not quilt and I'm the same. Both my grandmothers quilted and pieced. We used a lot of quilts and comforts in our family—quilts for lightweight bedcovers in the summer and comforts of nine-patch wool tied with yarn for heavy warm covers in winter."

She has made about 25 quilt tops through the years, favoring traditional patterns in old-fashioned prints, such as the Bear's Claws and her recently completed Turkey Tracks. "Oh, I've made Rose of Sharon, Cherry Tree, Ohio Rose, Dresden Plate (with a viney border), and a Flower Garden, a good way to use all manner of colors. The colors you use make the quilt, and borders can help, too. I've seen quilts in some awful colors and others that made you dizzy to look at, but then what one likes, another doesn't. But no matter, the work must be neat, with the block and piece corners meeting exactly."



Mrs. Mary Betty, in her 80s, likes "to help out at the church. I've made six or eight quilts in recent years. It's my way of helping out."



Mrs. Radcliff with a Whirligig patch.



Mrs. Angela Marcinko of the St. Paul's Parish Wednesday quilting group in Athens.



A 1910 wedding gift to Mrs. Radcliff from her husband's mother, this pattern is known as the Tulip, North Carolina Lily, or Virginia Lily.

Having grown up in Albany, she remembers "seeing stacks of tops to be quilted" in the home of Mrs. Melva Radcliff, "who knows as much about quilting as anyone in the area could." Mrs. Allen added that it was Mrs. Radcliff's niece, carrying out the family tradition, who had quilted the prize-winning Allen entries for the fair.

Mrs. Radcliff laughed when she heard Mrs. Allen's endorsement of her skills and said, "I must have—if you count all sizes—quilted 100 or more through the years, even taking out my many years as a dressmaker. I've pieced and made for all my children and each of my seven grandchildren. Now I have a great-grandson, but he's too young to think of quilts yet.

"I quilted at home before my marriage in 1910. At 18 I taught in a one-room schoolhouse and then when I knew I'd be getting married, I hurried to piece and quilt and put a good store of quilts by.

"I've done so many that I can't remember them—pieced, appliqued, embroidered, cross-stitched—and in all the familiar patterns.

"Quilting is not difficult, but not everyone is a quilter. Our senior citizen group here in Albany quilts. They've worked on two tops in my home and some of the stitches had to be taken out. It's not hard, not if you're neat with your work. I used a #7 quilting needle, and you must gauge according to what you're quilting.

"A lot of times when my husband was ill here at home, I couldn't sleep. I'd slip downstairs where I had a quilt in the frame, and I'd work for an hour or so to quiet my nerves. But then I've had friends say quilting was so tedious it made them nervous! Some are called to other things."

One of Mrs. Radcliff's prized possessions is an antique quilt made more than 100 years ago by a woman in her late husband's family, the reds and greens as bright as when their creator sewed them. The quilting is exceptional, with the feather pattern and diamond square done in at least ten stitches to the inch throughout.

Mrs. Radcliff, now 88, can no longer quilt since her eyesight is not up to it. "I love to quilt," she said. "You can't know how I miss it."

The affection for the craft that remark reveals is evident, too, in the talk of Nancy Crow and Francoise Barnes, two women separated in age by half a century from Mrs. Radcliff. Mrs. Barnes and Mrs. Crow are members of a local Textile Guild which meets each week to quilt, embroider, weave, card, or spin.

Nancy Crow was born in Holmes County, a center for the Amish in the state, and this fact has influenced the quilts she began to make a few years ago. She is a professional artist-craftswoman, holding bachelor's and master's degrees in fine arts. Her ceramics and weaving have been exhibited widely and have won numerous prizes and critical acclaim. For her, quilting has become another design medium.

"I started while awaiting the birth of my second child," she said. "I sewed several quick tops—my first was a nine-patch—and took them to the senior citizen group in Cambridge, Ohio, to be quilted. I got to know one of the quilters quite well, and my interest took off from there. I like quilting because it is working with color. I don't think in terms of pastels or whatever, I think in terms of color arrangements. I work out detail in the designs and colors before I begin, and I try for intense colors that vibrate."

She currently has four quilts in an exhibition in the Mansfield (Ohio) Art Center and one in the Springfield center, with the quilting on them completed by women in the Amish areas of both Holmes and Washington counties.

Much of the material used in her quilts comes from the Amish region, too, from towns like Charm, Berlin, and Millersburg, where, she said, "There is sometimes a feeling you've stepped into the Old World. The local IGA supermarket carries an outstanding selection of broadcloth in solid colors, with more than a dozen shades of one color. The stores cater to the Amish, whose quilts with their bold colors and geometric forms are a distinct unit within the American tradition and quite different in visual impact from the work of the traditional quilter in the Athens area."

Francoise Barnes, a Frenchwoman married to James Barnes, dean of the University's Center for Afro-American Studies, also has four quilts in the Mansfield exhibition. She is now working on a complex design that will combine several shades of purple and magenta with black, bright green, and blue, in prints and solids. Some of her material has come from France, but much of it was bought on trips to Holmes County.

"We take from traditional patterns," Mrs. Crow remarked. "Francoise has made Amish patterns such as Light and Shadow and two of mine are adaptations of the Log Cabin. I don't think you can rediscover the rectangle or the circle. But you can take forms and principles and put them together in your own way. In her latest quilt, Francoise is using the old Flying Geese motif, but in a highly original way."

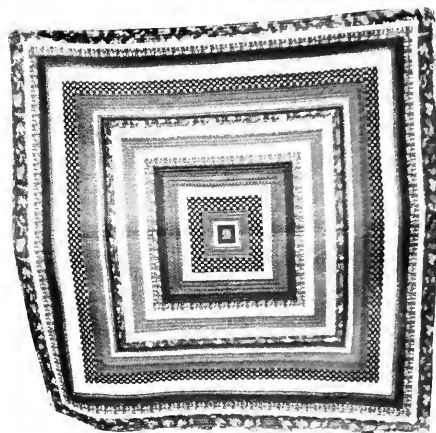
Both women started piecing by hand, but then agreed there was no rhyme or reason to do so. "The sewing machine has been invented, after all, and machine work stays together better." But they draw the line at machine quilting. "It would ruin our quilts," Mrs. Barnes said. "Handwork has a softness to it and does not lie on the surface as does machine quilting. It creates quite a different dimensional effect."

Mrs. Crow has quilting frames and has a quilt in them, waiting to be finished. Laughing, she noted that "A lot of people have tried out my frames, and I've spent a lot of time taking out their stitches. There was one woman—well, I don't know what she was thinking!"

The quilts which Nancy Crow and Francoise Barnes create are a far, far cry from those of Mrs. Fulton, Mrs. Allen, Mrs. Stanley, and Mrs. Radcliff. Their work, which can more readily be viewed as paintings in cloth than as bed coverings, can be seen, however, as a natural extension of the process by which the quilt moved from being a utilitarian object and a thrifty way to utilize every scrap of new and used material, to become an outlet for the creative impulses of American women from the colonial period onward. ☞

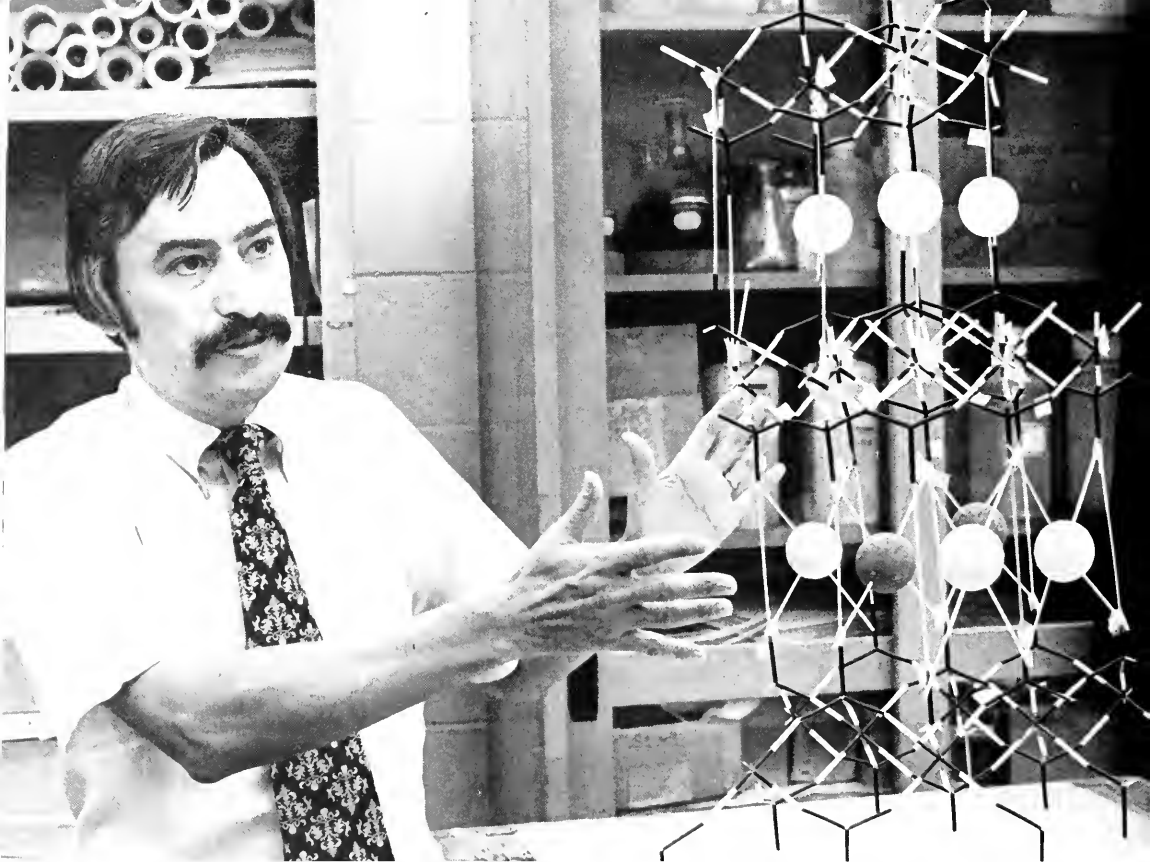


PHOTOGRAPH BY ELLEN CERI



PHOTOGRAPH BY NANCY CROW

Francoise Barnes's adaptation of the Amish Light and Shadow pattern.



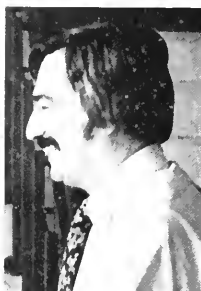
*The first of what will be an intermittent series on faculty and administrators. Who do you suggest for future profiles?*

## University Personalities:

# Dr. Abraham Clearfield

Professor Abraham Clearfield of the Chemistry Department is a rare entity on a university campus: a full professor who is greatly interested in teaching freshmen. Clearfield, who came to Ohio University in 1963, finds freshmen a challenge, for they are the most difficult students to teach. "These kids don't know what to expect. Many of them never did any work in high school and freshman courses come as a great shock."

Clearfield finds that his interest in freshmen is due, in part, to a new type of student. "Colleges and universities used to be elitist institutions. Freshmen came from the upper half of their high school classes and either sank or swam. Now, a sizeable fraction come from the lower half of their high school classes and are lacking in language and mathematical skills. The language of science is new to them, too."



Clearfield finds it a challenge to help freshmen build necessary skills. In his lectures he tries to make chemistry more accessible by integrating it with the study of science as a whole. "It's important to relate to what students know and understand. For example, I discuss the electric light in explaining atomic theory, or refer to the operation of the refrigerator, or how salt causes snow to melt."

The development of good study habits is also a skill Clearfield tries to develop. In his lectures, he tells students to find a level of study that they need, encouraging them to outline. He tries to meet with his students personally, but many shy away from personal contact.

To facilitate contact, he began holding help sessions in the evening with small groups. (His lectures include about 120 students, with graduate students teaching the laboratory sessions. At one time during the University's peak enrollment, the department tried lectures of 400 students, but Clearfield found himself preferring the smaller, cozier sessions.) Help sessions now have been instituted by the Chemistry Department, and Clearfield still holds many of them himself so he can meet with his students on a one-to-one basis.

In discussing the problem of incoming freshmen, Clearfield explains that the background of students is critical. "Those who've read, tinkered—the ones who've learned to think in abstract terms are the ones who succeed. Television stands in the way of the learning process, for it does all the thinking for an individual, preventing the use of the imagination."

Elected as University Professor one year, Clearfield taught a remedial course in math and chemistry combined, to help those who thought their backgrounds were too poor to continue in the sciences. Of the 45 students enrolled, he feels that he helped half of them, those who had the skills but lacked confidence, such as young men returning to college from the army. One girl from that class now has a 3.8 grade point average and is applying to medical school.

In 1970, Clearfield taught an Honors College course on science for the nonscientist. The 15 students liked it so much they insisted he continue the course for a second quarter, which he did.

While Clearfield finds freshmen a challenge, he also enjoys teaching graduate students. "With them you have the joy of developing a subject you're interested in."

Unlike many members of university faculties, Clearfield came to teaching from industry. Prior

to coming to Ohio University, he worked as a chemist for the National Lead Company in Niagara Falls. While working in industry, he conceived several research ideas which his position didn't allow him to pursue. A university setting is conducive to such individual work, and he went about selecting one with a substantial doctoral program, which could aid and support his investigations. A good laboratory was necessary for his work, and he has been able to build one at Ohio University.

Clearfield's research is concerned mainly with studying ion exchangers, crystalline materials which are familiar to us as water softeners. His studies concern the structure of these materials and the changes they undergo. The crystals behave similarly to soil and catalyze certain reactions, for example, the transformation of carbon monoxide to carbon dioxide. Scientists at the National Institute of Health have discovered that the crystals purify water and can be used in portable kidneys, but they don't know why. Companies manufacturing the portable kidneys have come to Clearfield to help explain the behavior and properties of the crystals.

Clearfield synthesizes the materials in his lab. Invented as gels at Oak Ridge, they behave differently as crystals. Interest in ecology has revived interest in the crystals, due to the role they play in balancing ecosystems. In addition to their use in studying the properties and processes of soil, they are useful in studying the chemical balance of seawater. Recently, Clearfield presented a paper on their function at an international conference on seawater.

In addition to his other activities, Clearfield has also found time to develop exchange and research programs in Sweden and Yugoslavia. The exchange program in Sweden sends Clearfield's post doctoral students to meet stiff Swedish competition (Sweden still has an elitist education) and some of Sweden's best come to Ohio University's Chemistry Department. The Yugoslav program, however, involves joint research. Currently, Clearfield is attempting to obtain funds to bring one of his Yugoslav colleagues to the University for a year.

During the 1974-75 school year, Clearfield worked as a consultant for the National Science Foundation in Washington and though it was an exciting year, he was glad to return to the University. His travels abroad and to national conferences satisfy his wanderlust; he and his wife are happily settled in Athens, and both of their sons are University students. **RRF**

# How Are We Permitted To Teach

by George Weckman



George Weckman earned his PhD in the history of religions from the University of Chicago, and began teaching at Ohio University in 1968. He is an associate professor in the Philosophy Department, teaching courses in Indian and Far Eastern religions, on the Bible, and in the philosophy of religion. He has presented papers at professional meetings in Chicago, New York, and Stockholm; and his articles have appeared in *Numen*, *History of Religions*, *American Benedictine Review*, *Christian Century*, *Ohio Journal of Religious Studies*, and *Lutheran Forum*.

Dr. Weckman is organist and choirmaster at the Lutheran Church in Athens, continuing a 20-year participation in those capacities in a variety of churches. He is a member of the board of the Athens ACLU, the Athens Soup Group, the executive committee of OUC-FA, the Cultural Activities Committee of the University, and the executive committee of the Philosophy Department. His current hobbies and fascinations are playing music for two pianos, art collecting, and butchering.

America's founding fathers were clear about the separation of church and state but not about the separation of religion and state. We sometimes forget that these are two different problems. For most of its history this country openly professed a kind of common denominator religion which was supposed to determine the tone of all its activities including education. No better indication of this can be found than the quotation from the Ordinance of 1787 inscribed on Ohio University's College Street gate to the main green: "Religion, Morality, and Knowledge, being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged." It was assumed that, while religious organizations were not to be linked with the government, the state still had a legitimate concern in promoting, even inculcating, certain religious and moral ideas and ideals.

People who feel the same way today object to so-called un-American and un-Christian texts used in the public schools. They want the educational institutions of their governments to teach some ideas and not others, to present some aspects of human life and not others. Let us assume that most people do not want a state church or an established religious organization linked with government. A problem still remains regarding religious ideas and practices: To what extent shall they be supported by public money or in public institutions?

On the question of religious practices the answer is increasingly clear. Ritual activities, even including prescribed times for silent prayer, have been declared illegal by the courts in decisions with much, if not universal, public support. We still have prayers recited at commencements and convocations, even though this practice is not consistent with other principles of school and state. Such religious trappings of the academic world persist probably because they are so unimportant anyway, but if they do not die out soon I predict that those who cherish consistency in public practice will take steps to suppress them.

In the other area of religious practice—morality—schools and the society at large are moving in a similar direction. Unless the mode of behavior is contrary to civil law, schools find it legally difficult these days to maintain a spe-

# Religion at a State University?

cial standard or prohibition. Again Ohio University provides a good example, for who would think of enforcing today the early regulation that no student should enter a tavern without the permission of a faculty member? No matter how fine a moral ideal it is for a student to be temperate in drink, we no longer feel that the school should enforce laws which the society at large ignores.

Even though these issues are still controversial in some quarters, we can conclude that the principle of separating church and state has come to mean the separation of religion from the state in so far as the use of religious rituals and the enforcement of moral standards are concerned.

That does not end the story, however. We have two other questions: 1) Should schools promote ideals which may be somewhat religious in nature? 2) Should schools teach information about religions? The first question is a very serious one, with much to be said on both sides; I cannot deal with it adequately here. The second question brings us to the heart of the matter at hand.

In 1963 the Supreme Court spoke to the latter issue directly: "One's education is not complete without a study of comparative religion . . . Nothing we have said here indicates that such a study of the Bible or of religion, when presented objectively as part of a secular program in education, may not be effected consistent with the First Amendment."

The separation of church and religion from the state is no reason for ignorance about the religious activities and thoughts of mankind. Without an understanding of the dynamics, structures, and ideas of religion in general and of specific religious traditions, much of human behavior and reflection does not make sense. Schools, public and private, must offer instruction concerning this significant area of human experience if they are to be truly informative and helpful. Religion is just too prominent an aspect of life to be neglected.

The need for clearer understanding of religion is being recognized at many levels of education today. Wright State University is the home of a very important effort to bring the study of religion into public primary and secondary schools. The Public Education Religion Studies Center, formed in 1972, seeks "to encourage

and facilitate increased and improved teaching about religion within constitutional bounds."

Two of Ohio's state universities (Miami and Cleveland), have religious studies departments which offer undergraduate major programs and the master's degree. Other universities offer some courses in religion and religious history, often through foreign culture programs and history departments. At Ohio University most courses focusing on religion are given in the Philosophy Department. These courses include Old Testament and New Testament; a history of religions sequence of three courses dealing basically with India, China, and Islam; and two advanced level courses: "Contemporary Religious Thinkers" and "Myth and Symbolism." Many other courses include the study of religion in whole or in part.

These courses present the professor with special demands because they deal with controversial and deeply felt matters. If we have established how we may (and should) teach religion so far as legality is concerned, we have yet to review in this article how such instruction can in fact be accomplished. What extraordinary methods need to be used, what special care must be exercised?

Three words used by the Supreme Court in its decision quoted above set the tone and limits of the academic study of religion: "comparative," "objectively," and "secular." Let us examine these concepts as they indicate the guidelines for university religion courses.

F. Max Mueller, the editor of *Sacred Books of the East* which did much to encourage the study of nonWestern religions in the last century, had as his motto, "To know one is to know none." That says quickly why the academic study of religion demands an examination of more than one religion or religious tradition. What if one were to base all his or her knowledge of dogs on Lassie? One might know Lassie and something about collies, but would have quite unsatisfactory knowledge of dogs in general. One might then expect chihuahuas to grow much larger or think that great danes had been shaved. Whatever usefulness there is in knowing about dogs must be derived from a fair sampling and based on common, not peculiar, characteristics.

The comparative approach to the understanding of religion ensures that the student will

not confuse the specific with the generic and aids in the preparation of a better definition of religion. For example, many people casually assume that religion is a matter of belief in a god. What do we do with Buddhism then? Contrary to popular Western misconception, most Buddhists do not conceive of the Buddha as a god. Essentially Buddhism is atheistic and yet it has most of the other characteristics of a religion.

The comparative approach is also important for the aid it can give us in dealing with our neighbors on this shrinking globe. The educated person today should not be surprised by snake-handling in Appalachia or reverence for cows in India. These things are understandable even if we are not about to commend them or adopt them ourselves. When we come to realize the sense behind strange as well as familiar piety we add to our comprehension of human potential. Certainly a better understanding of man is a high priority in education.

Objectivity in the study of religion is aided by the examination of many different religions but is not guaranteed thereby. It is all too easy to color descriptions and definitions with evaluations. It is probably impossible to make a completely unbiased statement, but we can try to be objective and identify where objectivity is being endangered. One handy technique for maintaining a relatively neutral position consists of finding both good and bad things to say about every topic. Admittedly it is a bit difficult to find the good in cannibalism or human sacrifice, yet these practices did have serious and noble motivation within the worldviews of certain cultures. On the other hand there are problems to be seen in some of the more acceptable religious ideas and practices, e.g., charity, meditation, self-sacrifice.

Objectivity means impartiality but not lack of interest. The student of religion needs to have some sympathy or empathy for man's religious life, and of course, curiosity. The excitement of the study should flow from the desire to know, rather than the will either to defend or to condemn. Inevitably personal experiences and predilections will enter one's work. When they are recognized for what they are, they can aid understanding instead of hindering it.

The third term, "secular," is usually under-

stood today to mean antireligious. In its etymology we discover that it has developed from meanings that were associated with the ages or periods of human history. Taken in this root sense, the secularity of education concerning religion translates into a focus primarily on this world and on man. I explain this to my classes by saying that we study not god but men's ideas about god. Not "How can I be saved?" but "How do various Christian, Buddhist, Muslim, groups or theologians describe the process of and requirements for salvation?" is the type of question with which we operate.

Of course the big questions are always in the background. People study religion, philosophy, and the other humanistic disciplines in part to help them construct their own views of the world and themselves. I do not feel that this should be the direct aim of a course of instruction no matter how important it is as an indirect aim. One comes to know more of oneself by examining the self-understanding of other people than by sheer introspection.

The contrast often posed between knowing others and knowing oneself is false for the most part. Students often ask questions that indicate their confusion on this point. They will say, "In this paper (essay, test, etc.) do you want me to write what is in the text and lectures or my own ideas?" To this I reply with an allegory: Suppose a cook, desiring to be creative, made a stew with a jar of mustard, a cup of salt, and a watermelon—it would be original but not much good. It would be better for that cook to read a few recipes and learn the qualities of ingredients. Successful creativity in the kitchen and in the mind consists of knowledge interestingly applied.

So we hope, in teaching courses about religion (and everything else), to give the students the components of understanding and judgment that will enable them to construct a usable picture of the world and self. The comparative materials, objectivity in method, and the secular emphasis on the human factor all should contribute to a better understanding of religion, whether one ends up being religious in any sense or not. Constitutionally we certainly may teach religion in a state university and educationally we must, as long as these academic hallmarks are preserved. ☺



# They Don't Wear White Coats, But...

Nancy Bain



PHOTOGRAPHS BY HARRY SNAVELY

Laymen usually associate the idea of university research with laboratory work—the image of the white-frocted scientist handling complex machinery or peering into a microscope comes readily to mind. Few people realize that practically all faculty, in all departments, are involved in research at one time or another in their academic careers, if not continuously. Some may disapprove of the use of the term in connection with the humanities, but when a faculty member in English or history sets out to prove or disprove a particular hypothesis, the investigatory work necessary can only be properly described as research.

Studies in the humanities range from those with strictly factual content to those with primarily speculative matter. In the latter, the result of research is the development of a new set of ideas on a particular subject, for example, a new interpretation of the causes of a war, or a new evaluation of a writer from a particular period. In the former, however, the methodology parallels that of the laboratory scientist: a conclusion is to be reached by observing and organizing empirical data.

In our March, 1974, issue, we ran an article by John Ray which discussed a sampling of research projects undertaken by scientists at Ohio University. This article will give a brief sample of the kinds of research being done by members of humanities departments. Some of the projects to be discussed are of a speculative nature, whose purpose is to add to or change our understanding, while other projects are concerned with immediate, contemporary situations.

One such project is being conducted presently by Nancy Bain, an assistant professor of geography. She is studying population distribution and settlement in connection with the Gavin power plant in southeastern Ohio.

The Ohio Power Company, a subsidiary of American Electric Power, is presently constructing the General James M. Gavin Power Plant in Gallia County. The Southern Ohio Coal Company, also a subsidiary of AEP, has opened coal mines in Meigs County, to supply the plant with fuel. It was projected that the plant and the mines would create approximately 3,000 new jobs in the region and bring in about 10,000 new residents. It was hoped by officials that a widening spiral of economic growth would occur in the area, which would help attract other industry.

Public officials hired a Washington, D.C. consulting firm to study the scene and make recommendations. Six counties—Athens, Vinton, Jackson, Meigs, Gallia, and Mason County, West Virginia—were designated by the study as impact areas. Within the counties, Athens-Albany, McArthur-Hamden-Jackson, Gallipolis, Salem Center-Wilkesville, and Pomeroy-Middleport, were designated as the particular growth areas—since they already had the facilities and services necessary to satisfy the needs of an expanding population.

Ten percent of the new employees have been hired, so it is possible to make preliminary comparisons between the projection and the actual movement of the workers, which Bain is presently doing. Her results to date show a good deal of variance with the consulting firm's projections.

More than ten percent of the employees hired so far do not live in the six impact counties. Most of these are miners who

live in West Virginia counties other than Mason County. These people decided to commute to their new jobs rather than move to the impact counties, though their own areas offer fewer services and facilities than the designated impact counties.

As a result, only about 50 percent of the new employees live in the five growth centers as opposed to the projected 85 percent. And there are substantial differences in the way they are distributed in the growth centers. The Athens-Albany and Gallipolis centers have basically the influx predicted by the study. But the Pomeroy-Middleport center, closest to the Gavin power project, have almost twice as many people, while the other centers have many fewer families than projected.

Only a little over one third of the new employees moved to take their new jobs. Although all the movers did settle in the six impact counties, they did not all settle in the growth areas. What makes this of particular interest is that the outside settlement occurred in spite of an extensive public relations campaign waged by the American Electric Power Company and public officials.

Professor Bain concludes this part of her study by saying that "If trends continue, and if the workers are able to get gasoline, most of the new employees will not move from their present homes, and of those who do move, only about half will move into the growth areas."

She is still studying the situation, now concentrating her attention on the factors which influence the miners' choices of homes.

\* \* \*

John Hollow



John Hollow, an associate professor in the English department, is involved in a very different, speculative venture. Initially, he set out to examine the relationship between science and literature. He was particularly interested in seeing what kinds of reading famous scientists had done, and if it may have led, indirectly, to their discoveries. For example, learning what Einstein read may reveal what inspired the theory of relativity. Such correlations between science and literature exist, and Hollow gives the example of uncertainty in modern physics. Not only are we unable to predict the behavior of any one small particle, we do not even know whether its behavior would be the same without the interference of the machine which is examining it. Translating this to literature, or to psychology, we find that the mind which explores itself tends to bend things—point of view changes perspective. In literature, the language of consciousness, the stream of consciousness technique used by James Joyce, for example, ultimately results in word games, in *Finnegan's Wake*.

Hollow found that the study of which he initially conceived was vast, and impossible to undertake with his limited time and resources. Instead, he has been concerning himself with studies of individual science fiction writers. Part of his current work involves a reevaluation of some 19th century fiction. Much of author William Morris's late work is back in print now—such work is fiction inspired by the "soft" sciences of folklore and anthropology. Until now, such works have been neglected

by critics because they didn't deal with such themes as self-discovery and growing up. Hollow says, "A scholar's job is to reinterpret the past, and in doing so, we haven't really coped with science fiction. H.G. Wells, for example, wrote novels that tried to face up to the implications of Darwin and Kelvin, of evolution and the heat death of the universe. Such themes do not make for drawing room novels, and we have not been fair to them."

Other writers involved in Hollow's studies are Edgar Rice Burroughs, whose Tarzan and Mars series have popular appeal because of the mythical archetypes they deal with; Robert Heinlein, who uses travel in different dimensions to deal with alienation, the theme of much modern literature; and Arthur C. Clarke, whose stories of visitors from other planets describe man as evolving into something more than man. "The bomb is always in the background of Clarke's work," says Hollow, "and the starchild at the end of 2001 is the desperate hope that mankind will somehow survive."

\* \* \*

Analysis of statistics also played an important role in a study undertaken by journalism professor Hugh M. Culbertson. With an American Newspaper Publishers Association grant, Culbertson set out to examine veiled or unnamed news sources and to determine what effect these vague attributions have on the reading public. His study had two parts, the first being a content analysis of several newspapers for veiled sources, and the second being a survey of people's reactions to the use of unnamed sources.

Culbertson examined three levels of newspapers: *The New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, regarded as the leaders in investigative journalism; *The Chicago Tribune*, *Detroit News*, *Philadelphia Bulletin*, and the *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, as the largest circulation dailies in four metropolitan areas; and six Ohio newspapers representing different geographical areas and circulation levels.

Culbertson and his assistants found that although there was a great degree of variation among the three types of newspapers, there was little variation within the types themselves. For example, while the level of veiled attribution was almost twice as high in the *Times* and *Post* as it was in the smaller Ohio papers, there was little variation between the *Times* and the *Post*. The two latter papers rely heavily on their own staffs for their investigative reporting. The smaller papers, however, tend to focus on consensus news rather than on controversies likely to require veiled attribution.

The time period in which Culbertson performed the study included the summer of 1974, a period of intense Watergate activity. In the Watergate coverage, 40 percent of the articles would not name sources. The reader may recall that during this time, the White House was blaming the House of Representatives and particularly the House Judiciary Committee for the news leaks. Culbertson's study found that, to the contrary, the White House accounted for 21 percent of the leaks, while the House of Representatives accounted for 17 percent. Culbertson remarked, "It appears that the White House was as much the sinner as the sinned against."

Hugh Culbertson



In the stories, the adjectives describing the veiled sources are virtually all positive; the sources are usually of high status in an organization. As a rule, though, journalists don't rely on a single veiled source but seek out and use other confirmation.

As might be expected, the veil is more vague in international coverage, where very little clarifying information is given. This could be attributed to the need for diplomatic secrecy. On the state and local levels, however, there is more clarification.

The second and more revealing part of Culbertson's study examined the extent to which people notice veiled attribution, and the degree to which they are skeptical. He was aided in this part of the study by Dr. Nancy Somerich, assistant professor of communications at Cleveland State University. They supervised the canvassing of three areas: the Zanesville area, which has an unusually low penetration by outside media and which is relatively poor; the Shaker Heights area outside of Cleveland, which is perhaps the most well-to-do community in Ohio, with a mean annual income of \$26,000 per family; and the Athens area.

Culbertson's results are intriguing. While most people (68 percent) tended to be suspicious of veiled sources in the abstract, such suspicion didn't translate into distrust of an actual story. When asked for ratings according to levels of interest, people tended to rate the veiled story as more interesting than the named story, indicating a positive response to a level of intrigue.

When people doubted a veiled source, they tended to question the honesty rather than the competency of the source. According to the patterns of adjectives used to describe the sources, people trusted them as experts and didn't consider them devious or dishonest, but rather questioned their motivation.

Two-thirds of those interviewed attributed motivation for secrecy to news sources rather than to the reporters. The better educated, in particular, tended to be more suspicious of bureaucracy.

One question discussed the pros and cons of leaks, suggesting such ideas as leaks are good in maintaining the people's right to know, or leaks are bad because they hamper grand jury investigations. Those questioned were asked to favor or disapprove of leaks in the balance. Sixty-three percent favored leaks while 30 percent disapproved. The better educated stressed the good in news leaks while doubting the motivation of the veiled sources. While more aware of the need for leaks, they tended also to be more aware of behind-the-scenes intrigue.

The Watergate matter itself tended to make more people aware of veiled attribution. Without cueing on the Watergate affair, 60 percent said it made them more aware; 20 percent said there was no change in their awareness.

Of those who complained that there was too much Watergate coverage, the majority appeared to be poorly educated, inattentive to veiled sources, politically conservative, light media consumers, and generally skeptical. And further, the content analysis of the first part of the study didn't back up the claim that there was too much Watergate coverage.

In comparison of the two major political parties, the Democrats tended more to believe veiled sources and see the



PHOTOGRAPHS BY HUERT WILHELM

need for them, but the parties didn't differ in their attentiveness to veiled attribution.

Culbertson's study is now complete, and he and Dr. Somerich are publishing the findings.

\* \* \*

Hubert G. Wilhelm, professor of geography, has been working in a relatively new area, which is somewhere between the speculative and the objective. He has been correlating the early settlement of Ohio with folk architecture, particularly with barn forms. Log construction is the true folk architectural form in America, and Wilhelm finds Ohio a wonderful area for study, saying, "It is the one state in the Union where the main cultural streams from the upland south, the east, and the northeast came together and mixed."

He has made use of the 1850 census, but is involved primarily in tracing the appearance of the barn forms themselves, particularly a type known as the transverse crib barn, which is truly an American type despite its European antecedents. It comes from the upland south—eastern Tennessee, and parts of Georgia and Alabama.

European barns had no facilities for storing corn. Americans developed the crib barn from four log cribs, with two walkways between them. A common roof was added, shallow and pitched. Sometimes a hay mow was added inside the peak of the roof, and later in some cases, the mow was extended, or an addition built on to hold extra hay. In many barns, an additional mow was added above the existing roof. Stalls and additional cribs or machinery sheds were often added as wings on either side.

Wilhelm has found that settlers from Pennsylvania dominated the northern portion of Ohio, while settlements from Virginia dominated the southern areas. In the Virginia Military District (between the Scioto and Little Miami rivers) the settlements were primarily Virginian. He plans to return to see how far into the territory he'll find the crib barns, but that is a good farm area and, in modernizing, many farmers have replaced their crib barns with pole barns.

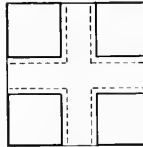
On his excursions in the Athens area, where many crib barns remain, Wilhelm's interest is usually met with apologies from farmers who say they planned to tear "that old thing" down years ago but never got around to it. The barns are still used for storage, and many are still used as barns, and so they remain.

The other type of barn common in the Athens area is the three-bay barn, which consists of a driveway and a hay mow on either side. Additional stalls and sheds have been added onto many. Three-bay barns were built in the 1870s and came from England through settlers from the east and northeast.

Wilhelm's studies are not yet complete, but there is no doubt that a close relationship between settlement distribution and the appearance of the barn types exists.

We have space here to cover, arbitrarily, only a few of the kinds of research undertaken by investigators in the humanities. In the article by Stanley W. Lindberg, in this issue, we have a more complete discussion of a project by a researcher himself.

Hubert Wilhelm



# *In Pursuit of Jane Digby*



Margaret Fox Schmidt, a former journalist and the wife of James Norman Schmidt of the creative writing faculty, always wanted to write a book. Now, at the age of 50, after receiving an MA and having a bout with cancer, she will have her first book published. *Passion's Child: The Extraordinary Life of Jane Digby* is forthcoming this April from Harper & Row. The story of how Margaret came to write this biography is a magical one. "Enough coincidences happened to make me somewhat of a mystic." And she adds that the book would not have been possible without her association with Ohio University.

The Schmidts came to Athens in 1965 when Norman was hired by the English department. Up until that time Margaret had always thought of writing fiction, but her author-husband's methodical work habits had discouraged her. She felt she would never have the discipline to see a novel through. She eventually decided to enroll in graduate school at the University, where she attended classes in English literature with students less than half her age.

(Her daughter, Melissa Thompson, was an undergraduate at the time.) Margaret became fascinated with research, and her goal changed from fiction to biography, more particularly the biography of some interesting woman from the past.

She received her master's degree in June of 1969, but on graduation day she was in a hospital in Fort Worth, Texas, her hometown, having a radical mastectomy. A week later she underwent surgery again, this time for cancer of the thyroid.

It was during her recuperation back in Athens that what she calls "the Jane magic" began to work. While browsing through the book rack of a local drugstore, she found a book called *The Fall of the House of Habsburg*. For some unknown reason she bought it instead of picking up her customary spy story or Gothic novel.

Early in the book she came across a passage about Emperor Franz Joseph's first prime minister, Prince Felix Schwarzenberg, a spirited character involved in the Decembrist plot and numerous love affairs, one of whom included Lady Ellenborough, the former Jane Digby. An intriguing footnote enumerated Jane's spectacular romantic escapades, which, it said, ended in the harem of a Bedouin sheik. "I never got beyond that footnote," Margaret said. "I left the Habsburgs to fend for themselves."

She tracked down a biography of Prince Schwarzenberg in the Library of Congress reference catalog and sent for it. This was in 1970, and her actual research for the book had begun, but she didn't know then if there would be enough information for a biography. According to the book about Schwarzenberg, Jane had an affair with Balzac, who used her as a model for his Lady Arabella Dudley in *Le Lys dans le vallée*.

Later Margaret discovered that Jane had not, in fact, been Balzac's mistress, although they were friends, and that she had not been in a harem but had been the only wife of a Bedouin sheik, Medjuel el Mesrah, for the last 25 years of her life.

Jane Elizabeth Digby was born in 1807 and grew up in luxury at Holkham Hall, the Palladian mansion in Norfolk belonging to her maternal grandfather, who later became Earl of Leicester. At an early age she showed an aptitude for languages, adventure, and for shocking her conservative family. At 16 she was the sensation of the London debutante season and was soon married to Edward Law, Lord Ellenborough, a widower twice her age. Ellenborough concentrated his attention on political power rather than his wife; she turned for affection first to a young librarian, who was at Holkham to catalog her grandfather's famous library. She was not yet 20. Tongues did not begin to wag, however, until she began to be seen too often with her first cousin, Colonel George Anson. The affair with Prince Schwarzenberg followed, culminating in a scandalous divorce. When the Prince abandoned her, she became the wife of Baron Karl von Venningen in Munich, but she rebelled against his attempts to turn her into a *Hausfrau* and eloped with Count Spiridon Theotoky of Corfu, following a duel

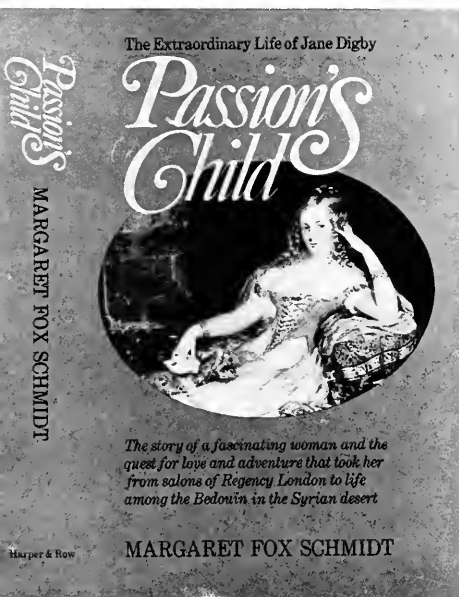


Painting of Jane by Joseph Stieler, housed in the Nymphenburg Palace in Ludwig's Gallery of Beauties.

Margaret at Minterne House, the Digby family seat in Dorset, England.



*Passion's Child* has just been chosen as an alternate selection by the Literary Guild.



the two men fought over her. Theotoky turned out to be another disappointment, and Jane left him for Cristos Hadji-Petros, an Albanian brigand chief, who was made general of the garrison at Lamia, Greece, for his part in the Greek War of Independence. Her only satisfying love affair was with Sheik Medjuel el Mesrab who was able to provide the affection and continuous excitement Jane craved. She and her husband spent part of each year in Damascus and the other part in the desert, on horseback (Jane could outride most Arabs) and in the Bedouin tents, where she waited on her husband and washed his feet like the other tribal wives. The "Sitt Mesrab" was described by her contemporaries as remarkably beautiful and vivacious even in her 70s. At 73, she complained in her diary, "It is nearly three weeks since Medjuel last slept with me. Whatever can be the matter?" Sir Richard Burton, famed translator of the *Arabian Nights*, described Jane as the most interesting woman he had ever met. Margaret thinks of Jane as "the ultimate romantic."

Following Jane's trail has taken the Schmidts on several trips to England, Germany, Austria, France, Italy, and Greece, where they were shown warm hospitality and sometimes treated as celebrities by Jane's titled family connections. They were entertained by Lord and Lady Digby at Minterne House, the Digby family seat in Dorset, England, where Lord Digby told them that his late father never allowed Jane's name to be mentioned. Margaret was assisted by Lord Leicester, whose Holkham Hall librarian turned out to be also head of the Western Manuscripts Section at Oxford's Bodleian Library, where there were several rare books she needed. The present Dowager Lady Ellenborough invited the Schmidts for cocktails, and she and Margaret have since become good friends. "At the small hotel in London where we spent six weeks, the staff was stunned by all the phone calls we received from the English nobility."

When the Schmidts returned to their summer home in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico, from Norman's sabbatical year in Europe, a friend who wrote for the *New York Times* suggested Margaret write the story of her trip for the Sunday Travel Section. Margaret contacted the travel editor, who asked her to emphasize Jane's story rather than her own travels, an idea that proved fortuitous. The article eventually appeared in the *Times* on February 25, 1973, and within a week Margaret received queries from two New York publishers. During spring break that year the Schmidts took a trip to Greece, so Margaret could explore Jane's Greek connections, while Norman researched his book on the decoding of ancient languages, *Ancestral Voices*. On their way back from Greece, Margaret discussed her project with two editors in New York, and when she returned to Ohio, she found a letter from an editor at Harper & Row.

Harper's had published in 1935 the only previous biography of Jane Digby, written by an Englishwoman who had access to Jane's Syrian diaries, but who got no cooperation from Jane's family to fill in the gaps in the story. The editor who contacted Margaret had long been fascinated by Jane and had wanted a new biography written. When Margaret



told him two other publishers were interested, he decided to fly to Ohio to see what work she had done. During that visit he went against usual publishing procedure, which would require a new author to submit a completed manuscript, and offered her a contract with a \$5,000 advance to cover travel expenses.

Margaret humbly does not take credit for doing all the research on her own. "I'll have to give at least 100 copies of the book to people who've helped me." Most of all, she credits the University and her University connections. It was through the late sculptor John Rood and his wife that she got an introduction to the Earl of Leicester at Holkham. With the help of Dr. Tekla Hammer, formerly Russian and German professor at the University, she was able to locate and get permission to read 70 letters from Jane to King Ludwig I of Bavaria. Through University sculptor Jack Baldwin's gallery owner friend in Greece, Margaret met the present Countess Theotoky, who was so enthusiastic over the research that she went to Germany to help read Jane's letters. Margaret was dumbfounded to find the front page London *Times* story of Jane's parliamentary divorce (April 1, 1830) on microfilm right here at the Alden Library. University zoologist Dr. Henri Seibert ran across an article in a copy of *Aramco World* that mentioned Jane Digby. He showed it to Margaret, and she began corresponding with the author, John Brinton of Beirut, who ended up sending her his own microfilm of Jane's Damascus household account book.

The following anecdote is the kind of fortune Margaret attributes to "the Jane magic." The Schmidts have a friend in Mexico, Harold Cook, an elderly scholar and poet who had become nearly blind. When Cook planned a trip to Beirut, Margaret asked him to call on Brinton to thank him personally for his generous help to her. Incredibly, John Brinton turned out to be Cook's favorite student from the Avon Preparatory School in New York, where Cook taught in the 30s. The two men, who had not seen each other for 40 years, had a joyous reunion. And if that were not enough, Brinton directed Cook to an eye specialist in England who was able to restore Cook's sight to the point where he can read again. On a later trip Cook went to Corfu, where, through Margaret, he became good friends with the Countess Theotoky and had dinner with the famed English author, Lawrence Durrell, who had known the countess since he was a boy.

Margaret is dazed by it all, feeling that somehow it was Jane who caused her to make the unlikely choice of the Habsburg book in the drugstore; she credits the excitement of doing the book with keeping her healthy. She is still amazed at the coincidences that brought bits and pieces of Jane's story to her from so many different sources. In a mysterious way, Jane has entered Margaret's life, bringing fulfillment to her and excitement to those close to her.

She is thinking that her next book might be the story of the pursuit of Jane, and then perhaps a biography of Lady Hester Stanhope, whose escapades in Syria preceded Jane's by a few years. It's a brand new world for Margaret, thanks to Jane Digby. RRF

A sketch of Jane discovered by Margaret in London's National Portrait Gallery. Jane's family was unaware of its existence.





*Cay Horr and her husband Dave both graduated from Swarthmore College. After working as copy editor for The Ohio Review and receiving her MA in English from Ohio University in 1972, Cay returned to the University in 1974 and is working toward a PhD in English. When the weather is good and she is not involved with her family or grading 20 freshman essays or pondering the intricacies of the Victorian novel, she is usually outside.*

*Born and raised in a city, Cay finds herself becoming part of country living. Her bees assist in the pollination of her vegetable garden and a garden growing more than 20 varieties of herbs. She enjoys cooking and baking, particularly when the recipes use her own homegrown ingredients and include honey. "Beekeeping and gardening balance well with academic work," she argues, "because separately the pleasures of one offset the problems of the other, and together they feed both body and spirit."*



## Beekeeping: Stings or Honey?

by Cay Horr

On a warm, sunny spring afternoon when I return from teaching and attending classes at Ohio University, I don an old, long-sleeved work shirt, wrap the wristbands firmly closed with rubberbands, and tuck the shirt into a pair of jeans. I tuck the jeans into boots, put on gloves and a securely fastened veil and I'm ready—not for a party, but for a visit to my beehive. Before opening the hive I light a smoker with a few twigs and add a piece of old burlap which will smolder and smoke when I puff the smoker bellows. These precautions are necessary because inside that hive are about 25,000 bees, and an equal number of their sisters are out in the neighboring gardens, fields, and woods gathering nectar and pollen.

What makes a person become a beekeeper? It has been suggested that if you are thinking of beekeeping you should give yourself a quick associational word test: think "bee". If your immediate response is "sting", beekeeping may not be for you. If "honey" is your reaction, perhaps you would like to give bees a try. You might also imagine yourself partially covered with

buzzing insects. If you shudder, think twice about beekeeping.

I became a beekeeper almost by accident. Cathie Lobdell, my neighbor and the daughter of Ohio University history professor George Lobdell, was preparing to invest in the necessary equipment and bees to set up a single hive. When she mentioned her plans, I offered to split the cost and the responsibility.

Early winter is the time to think about beginning beekeeping. You need time to buy hives and supplies, assemble the hives, paint them, order bees from a reliable dealer, and generally prepare for that day in the spring when one or more packages of bees, complete with an already bred queen, arrive in the mail.

It is possible to buy working hives from beekeepers who wish to sell—if you can find them, and if you are prepared to move the bees. It is also possible to acquire new bees by hiving swarms in the late spring, a service for which many property owners will pay. But beginning with your own bees in clean new hives is probably the best way to start.

Before my bees arrived, I discovered that there were almost unlimited sources of information on bees and beekeeping. A quick trip to the Ohio University library provided me with several useful books, and I bought several others, including the text for the beekeeping course which is part of Ohio State University's degree program in entomology. My county agriculture extension agent had pamphlets which were published by the federal government, and he informed me that the Ohio Department of Agriculture employs a part-time entomologist through whom beekeeping information is available. Like many other states, Ohio has a state beekeepers' association which offers meetings and seminars, publishes an excellent collection of recipes using honey, and sponsors a state honey festival. The Ohio Honey Festival is held each fall in Lebanon, Ohio. Beekeepers can subscribe to two national publications, *The American Bee Journal* and *Gleanings in Bee Culture*, and they can participate in meetings on beekeeping on local, state, national, and international levels.

I found all the books and articles very helpful, but I got more enjoyment from talking to and working with other beekeepers. Beekeeping is truly a craft, and some version of the medieval apprentice system is perhaps the best way to learn it. From an experienced beekeeper you can learn how to work bees and you can learn how to interpret what you see. You discover where on the frames to look for eggs and how to tilt a frame so that the light will illuminate each

tiny white egg in the dark privacy of its individual cell. You'll learn how to find day-old larvae coiled like tiny white Cs on a small bed of food. An older larva straightens out and fills its comb cell almost completely; then it is sealed off by the workers with a wax cap for its pupa stage. When you look at a frame of this sealed brood, you learn to watch for the industrious new adult bee eating its way out, after which it will turn around and clean the cell from which it hatched, preparing for the queen to lay another egg.

Off in the corners and in the upper sections of the hive you find honey and pollen. The bees use pollen for feeding their larvae and need a great deal of it in the summer when the queen is laying heavily. Honey is the food of adult bees, and it is manufactured by the workers from the nectar collected. Bees will make and store far more honey than they need if they have access to plenty of nectar and have adequate storage room in the hive. Thus the beekeeper can rob the bees when they have extra honey.

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**Honey keeps well. Honey buried in Egyptian tombs 33 centuries ago has been unearthed and found to be still edible.**

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Experienced beekeepers immediately recognize the different classes of bees in a hive. The center of attention is the queen, mother of all the bees in the hive and source of its stability and success. The odor of her presence is part of all the bees in that hive, and they recognize an intruder at the door by its alien smell. The queen is an egg-laying machine, laying up to 2,000 eggs a day, and beekeepers select queens with the genetic ability to produce hard-working, gentle progeny. Although a queen may live for four years, she is at her peak during the first two years of her life. Many beekeepers replace their queens yearly, or at least every other year, to insure maximum productivity. Most beekeepers mark the queen with a drop of color on the thorax, so she is more easily seen among the other bees.

Most of the bees in the hive are workers—underdeveloped females who do all the chores. They groom and feed the queen, clean the hive, tend eggs and larvae, and go out to gather food. In the summer a worker bee works herself to death in about five weeks. When she hatches

she is fully grown and quite fuzzy. For the first three weeks of her life she works in the hive, cleaning cells, making wax and building comb, working with honey and pollen, guarding the entrance, and feeding the larvae. Then she moves out to become a field bee, gathering nectar, pollen and, occasionally, water. Parts of her fuzzy body gradually become smoothed off by rubbing the sides of countless flowers. On any fine afternoon when the sun hits the hive entrance, a cloud of fuzzy young bees will be seen flying in widening circles in front of the hive, trying their wings and orienting themselves for future flights. Out in the clover and dandelions you can observe the workers gathering nectar and pollen. If the bee is a pollen-gatherer, you will see the pollen collected in two small balls on her hind legs. You rapidly learn that the pollen of any particular plant has its own characteristic shade, from the brilliant yellow-orange of dandelions through the paler yellow of squashes and cucumbers to white pollen from certain trees.

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**To produce just one pound of honey 556 bees must fly the equivalent of one and one-third times around the world.**

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One group in the hive merely exists on the activities of all the rest. In the words of a favorite beekeepers' riddle, they are the ones who have no fathers, only grandfathers, and can father no sons but many grandsons. These are the drones, the idle males hatched from unfertilized eggs. Their sole purpose in life is to mate in midflight with a virgin queen and die in the act. A drone cannot sting (for the honey-bee's stinger is the modified ovipositor of the female), and he cannot feed himself with nectar from flowers. He must get honey from a worker or a filled honey cell. He seems merely tolerated in the hive and, if there is a period of dearth during the summer, the workers are likely to push him out of the hive and let him starve. They will do the same in the fall, as the weather gets cool and the bees ready themselves for the long cold winter ahead. A viable hive with a good queen always has a few drones lounging around, noticeably larger than their worker sisters and ready to take off to scout for a passing queen. When they fly they do indeed drone, with a louder, different buzz than that of the workers.

When beekeepers gather honey, they are doing what people have done for centuries. Man began by robbing bees where they were found, but it was quickly noted that there were ways of bringing the entire dwelling home, or of persuading bee colonies into hives made of hollow tree trunks, clay, or straw. It was learned that if the wild hive were destroyed and all the honey taken, the bees vanished. If the hive were preserved and some honey left for the bees, they often remained so it was possible to return for more honey. What was always needed was a better hive and a better way to get out the honey without unduly disturbing the bees.

The man who revolutionized beekeeping was an American, Lorenzo Langstroth, who in 1851 invented the movable-frame hive. The beehives we see today, resembling a series of boxes set one on top of the other, have inside each box a set of nine or ten parallel rectangular frames. The frames hang from bars at the top side of each box and are precisely spaced so that the bees build honeycomb on each frame without attaching the comb to the next frame or to the sides of the hive. Langstroth's invention was the fruition of his own work with bees and with the literature of bees and hives developed from observation and experimentation since about 1650. With a movable-frame hive, beekeepers can lift out each individual frame to check the brood chamber for eggs, larvae, and feed supplies, and the remainder of the hive for honey.

Shortly after Langstroth's development of the movable-frame hive, a satisfactory queen excluder was developed. Beekeepers already knew that a queen tends to lay her eggs within a somewhat limited area in the center of the hive. Workers put honey and pollen in the surrounding fringes but also up above the brood area, if there is enough space. The next stage of hive design thus called for some boxes, or hive bodies, to act as a brood chamber for the queen. Above these hive bodies was placed a wire grid with spaces just wide enough to let the workers pass through but too narrow for the larger egg-laden queen. Above the queen excluder are more boxes, the honey supers, where the queen can lay no eggs and the bees store all their extra honey.

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**During her lifetime a single worker bee gathers only about half a teaspoonful of honey.**

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With these component parts, beekeepers can manipulate their hives in various ways which aid the bees and facilitate honey production. A strong queen needs extra laying space, so an extra hive body may be added. When the weather is fine and nectar flows freely, extra honey supers are put on above the brood chamber. Most beekeepers have strong backs, for a loaded super weighs 20-25 pounds and a full hive body weighs well over 40 pounds.

People often ask me what I do when I look through the hive, often every week in the late spring and at least every two weeks in the summer and early fall. I usually say that I'm giving the bees a pep talk to encourage honey production. Actually I am checking the general condition of the bees, eggs, and larvae; the adequacy of honey and pollen supplies; and certain specific seasonal conditions. If we have a warm spell in early spring followed by more cold and rainy weather, I may find it necessary to feed my bees with a sugar syrup solution until the weather improves again. Later in the spring I begin to cut out queen cells.

Bees tend to swarm in the spring, and a large group of workers along with the old queen will leave the hive, hang for a while in the familiar swarm cluster, and then depart. Beekeepers who have such a cluster form will often rehive it in a new hive, or they will hive swarms which appear on other people's property. Rather than lose their own bees, though, most beekeepers aim at swarm prevention. They keep their hives queened with young and vigorous queens, allow the bees plenty of working space within the hive, and, as a preventive measure, remove all the queen cells which the bees build. If left to their own devices, queen cells develop normally and the first queen to hatch will kill her unhatched rivals. Unlike the worker bees, queens have unbarbed stingers and can sting repeatedly without dying. So the first queen hatched will sting through the cells of the other queen larvae. If a second queen hatches before the first can kill it in the cell, the two will fight for supremacy, sometimes with disastrous results for the hive. If both queens are mortally wounded and all other queen cells have been destroyed, the hive is doomed, for it has no way of reproducing itself without a queen.

No swarm will leave a hive unless there is a new queen about to hatch to replace the old, departing queen. Even satisfied bees instinctively build queen cells in the spring, and so beekeepers usually remove the cells as they are developing. More bees mean more money, so spring swarm prevention is important.

Beekeepers who collect swarms prefer the earlier spring swarms, remembering the old saying, "A swarm of bees in May is worth a load of hay; a swarm of bees in June is worth a silver spoon; a swarm of bees in July isn't worth a fly." The May swarm in a hive will increase rapidly during the summer, storing up plenty of honey to last through the winter and perhaps some extra for the beekeeper. The June swarm may do the same if the weather is good, but the July swarm doesn't have much chance of collecting enough stores to last through the winter.

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**Honey is one of nature's most powerful germ killers. Primitive societies often use honey on open wounds, for most germs cannot survive in it.**

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Southeastern Ohio frequently has lovely weather in the autumn, and bees make a lot of dark honey from late-blooming goldenrod and wild asters. I usually leave all this autumn honey in the hive, for a strong hive needs 60-80 pounds of stored honey to make it through the winter in good condition. If cold weather comes late and spring is early and mild, the bees often accumulate enough honey to permit removing some in June. I can either cut out comb for comb honey, which means the bees must rebuild all that wax, or I can use an extractor to get pure honey and return the empty comb to the hive.

A small home extractor looks like a glorified garbage can containing a wire mesh basket which can be spun around. With a hot knife I remove the lids, or cappings, from both sides of a frame of honey comb, place the frame in the basket, and crank. Centrifugal force spins the honey out of the comb and down the sides of the extractor. The honey collects in the bottom, and when I'm ready I open a bottom spigot and let the golden stream pour out. I filter it with a coarse filter which removes the occasional bee leg or wax chunk but allows all the pollen to remain in the honey, enriching its nutritional value. I store honey in clean jars in a cool place.

Extracting is a sticky business, and bees will be attracted by the aroma of all that honey if there are any open windows. I have to clean the

extractor, but there is no need to clean the frames of empty comb. After they are returned to the hive the bees go to work on them. All damaged wax is replaced, cells are built up, and little dribbles of honey in all cells are concentrated into a few filled cells at the center of the frame. Immediately the bees begin refilling the comb with fresh honey.

Later in the summer there may be more honey. A single hive may produce anywhere from ten pounds to more than 150 pounds of extra honey in a year. The production of any hive is related to a number of variables, including the strength of the hive, the weather, the flow of plant nectar, and conditions in the hive. The beekeeper controls what can be controlled, but like all farming, beekeeping is ultimately subject to the weather. A beekeeper's dream would be weeks of sunny, mild days with gentle evening rains. The bees fly on all fine days, and plants yield abundant nectar when the weather is nice and rainfall is adequate.

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Bees make 50,000 to 75,000 trips to their hive to make one pound of honey, and each trip averages a mile to a mile and a half.

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When fall comes I help my bees prepare for winter. I move frames around and encourage the bees to concentrate their activities in two hive bodies and as many supers. The queen will lay far fewer eggs. When the temperature inside the hive falls below 45° the bees cluster together in a mass, moving their bodies to maintain greater warmth in the center of the cluster. The queen probably stops laying for a few weeks entirely, but when she resumes late in January the temperature at the center of the cluster will have to be over 90° to insure correct development of eggs into larvae and new adult bees. Small wonder that bees need a lot of food to give them the energy to heat their cluster through the winter. On warm winter days the bees will come out to fly. You may notice honeybees on a tray bird feeder in the winter, diligently collecting tiny crumbs of birdseed. The pollen-collecting instinct is so strong that the bees are driven to collect these pollen-sized crumbs and then store them till time for spring housecleaning, when they will dump it all out, along with the bodies of those bees which have died during the cold weather. With spring the bee's year and the beekeeper's work start anew.

I don't think I would keep bees merely for the sake of honey. Getting started in beekeeping properly can run upwards of \$100, and costs for bees and for equipment are rising rapidly. Commercial beekeepers make money on honey chiefly through economies of scale. I do enjoy honey immensely and use it alone or in baking. When I have enough, I use it also for canning and my wine-making husband creates a fine dry mead with it. However, most amateur beekeepers who continue to keep bees probably do so because they enjoy the bees and the work itself.

We live at the edge of Athens, on an ordinary city lot but near both extensive woods and open fields. The bees feast on tree pollen and fruit blossom nectar in the spring, insuring all our neighbors of bumper crops on their apple, crab-apple, and peach trees. Bees pollinate all the nearby cucumbers, squash, and melons, as well as other vegetables and many flowers. I can distinguish my own bees in my herbs because they are more yellow than the dark wild bees which come down from the woods. I can stand outside the hive and watch my bees come and go, judging the nectar flow by the traffic and the pollen availability by the color of the balls on the pollen-bearers' legs. The activity of the bees reflects the rhythm of nature and the cycle of the seasons.

Bees are not domesticated as farm animals are. Man has merely succeeded in providing better living conditions than most bees can achieve in the wild. He has modified existing bee races by selective breeding, so that today commercially available queens and workers are gentler and more productive than their wild cousins. Even so, the society in my beehive is no different from that in a hollow tree out in the woods. Man has taken advantage of the natural tendency of honeybees to produce as much honey as they are able. Working a hive of bees offers us a chance to observe creatures who have their own highly developed, successful social organization. I've learned a lot of practical biology from my bees, and I have a greater appreciation of many natural processes.

Preserved in manuscript there is an Old English charm which beekeepers could recite to make a swarm of bees pause until they could be captured. Part of it says,

*Might, victorious creatures, descend to earth.  
Never fly wild to the wood.  
Be as mindful of my profit  
as every man is of food and homeland.*

We charm honeybees by giving them suitable homes, and we reap the profits of both honey and knowledge. 🐝

# Basketball's Assistant Manager

As you can read in any of its publications, Ohio University is committed to nondiscrimination in all educational programs, activities, and employment practices. One manifestation of this policy sits on the bench for the Bobcats' basketball games. Sue Mansfield, a sophomore from Reynoldsburg, Ohio, answered an ad for the team's assistant manager and was offered the position. Coach Dale Bandy thinks the situation is probably more remarkable to us outsiders than it is to the people involved. "She answered the ad, she had the interest, the experience, and the ability—she got the job."

The job entails keeping equipment in order, having the players' water supply handy, and keeping statistics, plus whatever other duties the manager may assign. At the level of assistant manager there is no call for her to be in the locker room, except at half-time when she takes in the first-half statistics. If Ms. Mansfield were to move up to the manager level, however, according to Coach Bandy, there could well be difficulties, since the manager must be in the locker room both before and after the games. But that is only a possibility for the future at this point.

Ms. Mansfield's experience for the position came from her role as manager of her high school basketball team, as a player in high school, and with the University's intramural team. Surgery on her wrist has prevented her qualifying for the women's intercollegiate team at the University.

Sports have always been an important element in the Mansfield family life. Both parents are interested in and have participated in sports and the whole family often gets together for a sandlot game of some sort. Ms. Mansfield's sister, currently in the Air Force, was disappointed to find no women's basketball team where she is stationed. So she tried out for, and made, the men's team, but she has not yet been permitted to play.

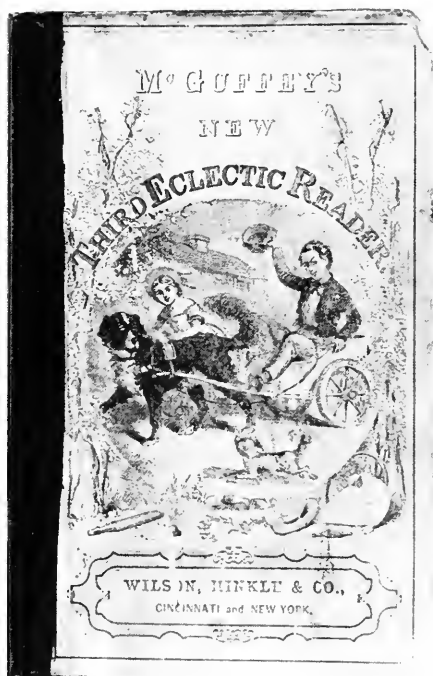
An older brother, an Ohio University graduate, is the athletic trainer at Marshall University in Huntington, West Virginia. A younger brother is particularly active in tennis.

As far as SHE can tell, Ms. Mansfield's presence on the Bobcat bench has in no way curtailed the players' behavior, but knowing such an attractive woman is watching and recording their every move may well be an incentive to them all.

PLHB



PHOTOGRAPHS BY HARRY SNAVELY



Stanley W. Lindberg is an associate professor of English. A Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Dickinson College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania (not Farleigh-Dickinson), he earned his PhD from the University of Pennsylvania (not Penn State), before coming to Ohio University (not the one in Columbus) in 1969. A co-founder and editor of *The Ohio Review*, he is the author of the forthcoming book *The Annotated McGuffey, Selections from the McGuffey Eclectic Readers, 1836-1920* (to be published in April by Van Nostrand Reinhold Company).

# The McGuffey Readers

## Textbooks to Middle America

by Stanley W. Lindberg

As the only textbooks recognizable by name to most Americans, the *McGuffey Eclectic Readers* are clearly among America's most impressive historical, cultural, and educational monuments. First published in 1836, they dominated the schoolbook market for over 75 years, holding and shaping the minds of several generations of Americans. Although they were used in nearly every state and territory, the *McGuffeys* enjoyed a popularity west of the Alleghenies and south of the Mason-Dixon line exceeded only by that of the Bible. Over 122,000,000 copies of the *Readers* were published before their use began to decline in the 1920s, and most of these copies (if one can judge by the survivors) passed through the hands of at least five or six students. Largely supplanted by more progressive school books after World War I, the *McGuffeys* have never actually gone out of print, and are currently experiencing something of a revival in response to the "back-to-basics" trend in American schools.

Yet the *McGuffey Readers* stand today as an ambiguous symbol—denounced by some as anathema, and regarded by others with reverence and nostalgia. While often referred to disparagingly or even jokingly by many professional educators, they are frequently the texts called for by outraged parents and other critics who are alarmed by the fact that so many of today's students are little better than functional illiterates. Distorted claims and charges alike often reveal that, while the name of the *McGuffey Readers* may be known to most Americans, very few people have a real understanding of just what these books were, and indeed still are.



The basic set of *McGuffey Eclectic Readers* consists of a *Primer* and six graded *Readers*, but even such a simple statement requires immediate qualification. First of all, the *Readers* were not graded for what we conceive of as first grade, second grade, etc.; they were simply arranged in order of increasing difficulty. Most classes were held in one-room schoolhouses (with children from six to the late teens under a single teacher), and every child used the *First Reader* until he or she proved qualified for the *Second*, which might have been very early or possibly not until the pupil was 14. The length of the school year was not the same for all pupils, since many children simply could not attend during harvesting season or spring planting. Graduation varied too. Most 19th-century students finished at least the *Second Reader*, but many left school permanently before completing the *Third*. And for many years anyone who had finished the *Fourth Reader* was considered very well-educated indeed. The practice of grading the *Readers* at a level corresponding more closely to our present school grade-levels was accomplished by the *McGuffey Eclectic Readers* only in 1879.

In addition to the best known *Primer* plus six *Readers*, however, there were several other *McGuffey* textbooks produced by the publishers. One of these, the *McGuffey Eclectic Speller*, received wide use for many years, but most of the others were fairly short-lived attempts to capitalize on the fame of the series and were of limited success. Such titles as *McGuffey's Eclectic Speaker*, *McGuffey's Eclectic Juvenile Speaker*, and *McGuffey's High School Reader* all appeared later in the century, and all were prepared by the publisher's assignees with no participation by anyone named McGuffey. Although the fact that they existed is evidence of the incredible popularity of the *McGuffeys*, their use and impact were relatively slight, and they are not normally regarded as part of the basic *McGuffey* series.

Even after we agree upon what books comprise the *McGuffeys*, however, confusion still exists. Extensive revisions at all levels occurred in 1844, 1857, and 1879, with less sweeping changes in individual *Readers* introduced at other times (particularly in 1841, 1853, and 1866). Although a number of the original selections manage to survive through all the later revisions, the 1920 edition of the *McGuffeys* that is still circulating today is a much different set of textbooks from the originals. Throughout the years over 1,200 different lessons appeared at least once within the pages of the *McGuffeys*, with many of the lessons being added, deleted, or revised because of such profound influences



as the Temperance Movement, Darwin's theory of evolution, and the Civil War. To be sure, a constant religious and moral philosophy informs all of the editions, but enough other elements change in focus or intensity to seriously qualify many of the current generalizations often heard about the *McGuffey Readers*.

Let it be conceded immediately that some of the most persistent criticisms of the *McGuffeys* are well-founded. The *Readers* do, in fact, contain most of the expected outrages of our Victorian heritage, and a look back through their pages will cast a glaring spotlight on some of the tangled values and hypocrisies of their times. Like their world, the *Readers* were often artlessly moralistic, heavily didactic, and fulsomely repetitious. They were aimed almost exclusively at a conventional white, Protestant, middle-class audience. They were highly selective in their endorsement of social reforms during their era (endorsing the Temperance Movement, for instance, but studiously avoiding the touchy slavery issue or the trade union movement). In constantly reflecting and explicitly endorsing the stereotypes for women's roles in the 19th century, they helped insure the continuation of those values for additional generations by stamping them into young minds. Similarly, in reflecting so pervasively the increasing sentimentality of the later 19th century, they helped to perpetuate its influence on American writing much longer than it might otherwise have lasted. In short, as the novelist Jack Matthews has noted, "It is strange to think that such an incubus of pedagogy did not destroy every precious flower of morality and intellect that was struggling to come forth in that day, but the fact is that an uncomfortably large number of gifted people were to emerge . . ."

For all of these now notable excesses and weaknesses, however, the *McGuffey Eclectic Readers* offered a number of corresponding strengths—as judged by both the values of their own era and those that most Americans think of as ours today. The moral values most heavily inculcated by the *Readers*—honesty, industry,

courage, kindness, courtesy, and obedience—are among those values whose absence in contemporary society is so eloquently lamented by social critics and serious commentators. And the *McGuffeys'* emphasis on basics in education (particularly reading, spelling, punctuation, and enunciation) suddenly appears more attractive to many Americans, including an increasing number of educators.

There can be little question that the *McGuffey Readers*—particularly in the earlier editions—were far more demanding and challenging than most present-day school texts. The subject range was greater, too, with many lessons on farming, science, history, and biography—in addition to the literary selections. And the subject of *death* (often taboo in 20th-century texts, at least until its recent popularization by the media) was confronted directly and frequently in the *Readers*. There was no room for the coddling of young pupils in the thinking of William Holmes McGuffey. As he wrote in an early "Preface": "[The author] has long been of opinion that a mischievous error pervades the public mind, on the subject of juvenile understanding. Nothing is so difficult to be understood as 'nonsense.' Nothing so clear and easy to comprehend as the simplicity of wisdom."

Especially in the upper-level *Readers* the major focus was on literature, and it is here that changed critical tastes will find them most dated. Overly represented, by today's standards, are such writers as Longfellow, Whittier, James Russell Lowell, and Oliver Wendell Holmes—all of whose reputations were enhanced by the *Readers*, but are now in decline. And the *McGuffeys* can easily be faulted for omitting Walt Whitman and Mark Twain—two of America's greatest writers—as well as for allotting brief space (and that only in the latest editions) to such eminent figures as Poe, Emerson, and Thoreau. It must also be conceded that the literary selections generally include far too many works by third- and fourth-rate writers (especially American poetasters). In some respects the *McGuffey Readers* represented all too well the popular literary tastes of their era.

It should be noted, however, that the *Readers* also provided numerous poetic selections of much higher order, including many from the Bible and from writers such as Shakespeare, Dr. Johnson, Hawthorne, and Wordsworth—passages which even today might well be chosen as "Elegant Extracts in Prose and Poetry" from the *Best American and English Writers*" (as the early *Fourth Readers* were subtitled). And along with lessons from American authors like Washington Irving, William Cullen Bryant, and James Fenimore Cooper, one can find a healthy number from such British writers as Sir Walter Scott,

Dickens, Goldsmith, Byron, and Tennyson. The British authors are represented more than adequately, in fact, to disprove the traditional charges against (or occasional claims for) the *McGuffeys'* supposedly parochial or nationalistic attitude.

All in all, the *McGuffey Eclectic Readers* introduced their users to a wider range of literature than that offered many of our students today. And much of what was provided was good literature—by today's or any day's standards. Students may have tasted only fragments from Shakespeare and other important writers, but they *were* being introduced to them. Furthermore, those young minds were being exposed to the *Readers* without such distractions as radio, television, and movies; the impact of textbooks then was doubtless much greater than it is today. It was perhaps in this respect that the *McGuffeys* made their most significant contribution to American culture. As Henry Steele Commager so accurately observes: "They gave to the American child of the 19th century what he so conspicuously lacks today—a common body of allusions, a sense of common experience and of common possession."

Among the myths that have developed over the years are many concerning the man whose name appears on the *Readers*: William Holmes McGuffey. Sometimes represented as having almost singlehandedly dragged America out of the swamps of ignorance, McGuffey himself never assumed such a larger-than-life pose. He knew, for instance, that there were at least two McGuffeys involved, the second being Alexander Hamilton McGuffey, William's younger brother.



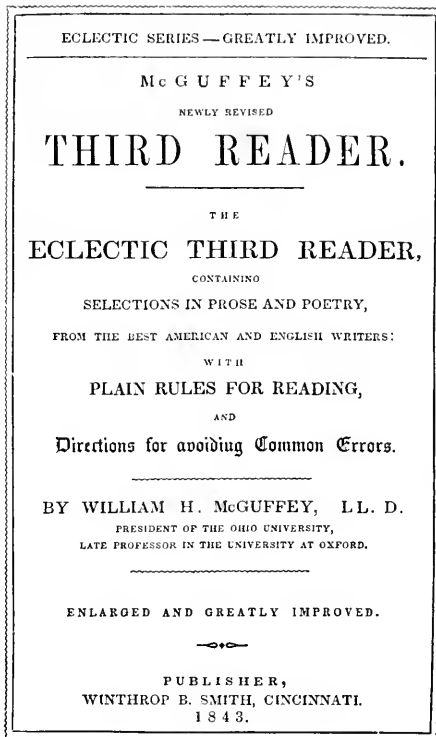
the story of Tom Smith, and said to you, 'Beware of the first drink!' The man who does this will never be a drunkard."

(William's wife Harriet may have had a part too; according to oft-repeated but unconfirmed family stories, she supposedly compiled the little *Primer*, but modestly—or shrewdly—asked that it be published under her husband's more famous name.) And almost from the start there were yet other hands shaping the *Readers*, since the publishers' editors took an active role in the subsequent revised editions. As the famous *McGuffey Readers* appear today, they are clearly much more than the work of any single individual.

The man who did start it all, however, was William Holmes McGuffey—now sometimes praised as the "Schoolmaster to Our Nation," but thought of more often as a book than as a person. Born in Washington County, Pennsylvania, on September 23, 1800, McGuffey spent most of his youth in Ohio. He was only two years old when his Scotch-Irish, Presbyterian family moved into the newly opened Northwest Territory, and settled near what is now Youngstown. He returned to Pennsylvania in 1820 to attend Washington (now Washington and Jefferson) College, and then taught a private school in an abandoned smokehouse near Paris, Kentucky, until he was selected in 1826 to become professor of ancient languages at the new Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. While at Miami, McGuffey married, was ordained a Presbyterian minister, argued with the college president until he was allowed to teach the classes in moral philosophy, and compiled the earliest of the textbooks that were soon to make his name famous.

The *Eclectic Readers* were initiated in the mid-1830s at the request of the Cincinnati publishing firm of Truman & Smith, who desired to offer a "Western" series of texts to compete in the growing market for school books in Ohio, Kentucky, and Indiana. They selected McGuffey for the job only after their first choice, Catherine Beecher (daughter of the famous Rev. Lyman Beecher), had declined. And they drove a hard bargain, for in 1836 they got McGuffey to sign a contract obliging him to compile a series of four graded readers, with royalties of ten percent on all copies sold to a total of \$1,000, *after which all profits reverted to the publishers*. The first two *Readers* were released in 1836; the *Third* and *Fourth* appeared the following year, accompanied by the small *Primer*.

Even before the success of the *Readers* was assured, McGuffey had left Miami University, and had in 1836 assumed the presidency of the newly formed Cincinnati College. (This and subsequent moves by McGuffey prompted Truman & Smith to alter the title pages, presenting not only his current rank, but also the amusing description "late professor in the University at Oxford"—clearly calculated to suggest grander



academic credentials than were usually accorded the institution at Oxford, Ohio.) The new Cincinnati College quickly assembled an impressive faculty and seemed to be off to a promising start, but the financial panic of 1837 doomed the venture. In 1839 McGuffey resigned, and the school closed shortly thereafter.

Almost immediately, however, McGuffey had another chance—this time as president of Ohio University in Athens, Ohio. Once again things started out well: the enrollment increased, and the reassessments of rental fees on University-owned property promised a more secure financial base for the land-grant school. But the townspeople of Athens, angered over the reassessments, persuaded the Ohio legislature to rescind them; and McGuffey's Calvinistic disciplinary measures quickly wiped out enrollment gains. At that point McGuffey further infuriated the residents of Athens by fencing in the college campus—in part to protect the new elm trees he had planted, but primarily to keep Athenian pigs and cows from grazing up to the doorsteps

of the college buildings. When a torchlight parade failed to convince McGuffey to reconsider his actions, the youngsters of the town (encouraged by their parents) began to throw mudballs at the college president whenever he appeared. Despite his manly response of lashing back with a long, red-leather horsewhip, he evidently lost often enough that, one day in 1843, an exasperated and mud-covered McGuffey came home and instructed his wife to pack immediately. Moreover, according to legend, he left hurriedly, not even pausing to write his resignation until he and his family were well out of Athens.

The rest of William Holmes McGuffey's life was much less exciting. In 1845 he became professor of moral philosophy at the University of Virginia, where he lived until his death on May 4, 1873. Although the royalty payments from his famous *Readers* had ceased long before he went to Virginia, McGuffey evidently received some additional reimbursement for later revisions. And after the Civil War the grateful publishers also gave him an annuity: a barrel of "choice smoked hams" every Christmas.



Although most of the credit for the *Readers* has gone to William Holmes McGuffey, a surprising amount of the work was actually done by his brother, Alexander Hamilton McGuffey (1817-1896). Alexander was the one who had the initial responsibility for the *McGuffey Rhetorical Guide* (1844), almost immediately retitled *McGuffey's Fifth Eclectic Reader*. He also did major work on the *McGuffey Eclectic Speller* in 1846 and was the only McGuffey who had any voice in the *Sixth Reader*, which the publishers decided to add in 1857. Although he taught English for a while in a Cincinnati academy, Alexander concentrated most of his efforts on the practice of law, which ultimately brought him a reasonable degree of success and wealth. His contributions to the *Readers* have been unjustly ignored or underestimated, partly because in the 1850s the publishers reduced Alexander's credit line to "A. H. McGuffey" and set it in a

flourishing script that positively invited a misreading of the "A. H." as "W. H." This subterfuge rubbed Alexander's pride enough that he insisted his name be removed completely in subsequent editions. The publishers complied, apparently without protest, furnishing no author credit for a few years; but by 1866 they actually started crediting the *Fifth* and *Sixth Readers* (mostly Alexander's editorial product) to "Wm. H. McGuffey, LL.D."—despite William's total lack of involvement with those books. As far as is known, Alexander didn't get any Christmas hams either.

The unsung Alexander certainly deserves more credit than history has allotted, but there were others who remained even more hidden in the saga of the *McGuffey Readers*—particularly the publishers and their editors. Most important of these was Winthrop B. Smith (1808-1885) in the firm of Truman & Smith, the one who first conceived the idea of the *Readers* and commissioned W. H. McGuffey to start the series in 1836. Smith's faith in the *Readers'* potential was such that one morning in 1843 he supposedly divided all of the firm's assets into two uneven stacks: a small one containing the *McGuffey Readers* and *Ray's Arithmetics*; the other containing all the many other books published by the firm *together with* the total cash reserve. He then proposed to Truman that they dissolve their partnership, with Truman to have his choice of the divided assets. Truman, according to the legend, selected the wrong pile and faded into oblivion; Smith was left with the textbooks that ultimately made him a millionaire. The dissolution of the firm may not actually have occurred as dramatically as the legend suggests, but the division of assets did follow those lines, with Smith acquiring exclusive copyright of the *McGuffeys* as part of the settlement.

The *McGuffey Readers*, however, were not markedly different from most other reading textbooks of the time (in fact, nearly all the textbooks borrowed heavily from the same sources and each other). The major reason the *McGuffeys* gained ascendancy was not because of any unique content or pedagogical approach, but because of the skillful promotion and marketing practices of W. B. Smith and the publishers who followed him. Even before the *McGuffeys* began to be published over his name alone, Smith had taken important steps to establish a secure base for his firm and to elevate *his* series of *Readers* above those of his competitors. Certainly the contract offered W. H. McGuffey is one indication of Smith's astute business practices. Even more important, however, were his fortuitous use of the label *eclectic*, and his exploitation of regional rivalries in promoting the *Readers*.

## LESSON IV.



blest guide tar'dy teach'er  
learn wrong les'sons school'-boy  
haste i'dler end'less knowl'dge

## HASTE THEE, SCHOOL-BOY.

1. HASTE thee, school-boy, haste away,  
Far too long has been thy stay;  
Often you have tardy been,  
Many a lesson you've not seen;  
Haste thee, school-boy, haste away,  
Far too long has been thy stay.
2. Haste thee, school-boy, haste away,  
Join no more the idler's play;  
Quickly speed your steps to school,

In later years McGuffey's name itself served to distinguish these texts from competing titles, but initially the prime identifying factor was the catchy word *eclectic*, a term then very much in vogue. Deriving from the tenets of Victor Cousin (a French philosopher who was trying to chart a middle road between the idealism of Kant and the empiricism of Descartes and Locke), the term was quickly absorbed into educational jargon. W. B. Smith had already sensed the slogan's drawing powers when he published Joseph Ray's *Eclectic Arithmetic* in 1834, and it was logical for the McGuffey Readers to carry the phrase, too. As the 1837 *Third Reader* announced to "The Friends of Education":

The *Eclectic System* of Instruction now predominates in Prussia, Germany, and Switzerland. 'It is in these countries that the subject of education has been deemed of paramount importance. The art of teaching, particularly, has there been most ably and minutely investigated.'

The *Eclectic System*, 'aims at embodying all the valuable principles of previous systems, without adhering slavishly to the dictates of any master, or the views of any party. It rejects the undue predilection for the mere expansion of mind, to the neglect of positive knowledge and practical application.'

These were well-received words at the time . . . obviously calculated to appeal to pragmatic

American minds which were confused by the foreign-sounding Pestalozzian system, but distrusted or rejected humanistic rhetoric about "the mere expansion of mind." Here was a system that was based on common sense—one that in a typically American way melded the best ideas from all possible educational worlds. And Smith, recognizing this clearly, made the most of it; within the next 20 years America was to see *Eclectic Histories*, *Eclectic Geographies*, even *Eclectic Shorthand* and *Eclectic Music* texts.

Smith also learned to cultivate to his advantage the growing regional pride of the West, especially prevalent in Cincinnati. Almost from the beginning, the *Readers* carried advertisements similar to this 1838 announcement:

The above works have been prepared by a few untiring laborers in the cause of Education (President McGuffey and others,) for the purpose of furnishing the South and West with a complete, uniform, and improved set of school books, commencing with the alphabet; and which might obviate the constant difficulties and perplexities occasioned by the too frequent changes in School Books. The effort has been successful. The fact that SIX HUNDRED THOUSAND of the Eclectic School Books have been disposed of during the short time they have been before the public, is the best evidence of their superior excellency. They have gone into GENERAL USE, and have become the Standard School Books of the WEST and South.



As the McGuffey *Eclectic Readers* achieved a more national distribution, such regional puffs became less common and were often replaced by statements actually disclaiming regional ethnocentrism. The 1844 *Fourth Reader*, for instance, stresses that "NO SECTIONAL matter, reflecting upon the local institutions, customs, or habits of any portion of the United States, is to be found among their contents, and hence they are extensively used at the South and at the North, in the East as well as the West." Since the more blatantly pro-West lessons had been removed, the claim appears sincere and fairly accurate. When one realizes, however, that the phrase "local institutions, customs, or habits" is primarily a euphemism for *slavery* (then under

attack in some New England textbooks), it becomes clear that Smith's cultivation/exploitation of regionalism has only become more subtle. It continued to be successful for some years, and the *McGuffeys* began to receive more and more adoptions in the South.

When the Civil War broke out, however, W. B. Smith and his associates were suddenly caught with a vastly reduced market and a large number of uncollectible accounts. The official embargo on trade with the South signaled rough times ahead, and some publishing firms were going bankrupt. The embargo had, of course, halted trade not only of the *McGuffey Readers*, but of its competitors as well. And this gave W. B. Smith the chance he needed, since the Confederacy contained no textbook publishers within its borders. Someone would have to supply that market, and somehow (the term *smuggling* is probably too harsh) the stereotyped printing plates for the *McGuffey Eclectic Readers* found their way to the Methodist Book Concern in Nashville, Tennessee. Soon the *McGuffeys* were being distributed widely throughout the Confederacy—and by the end of the war they enjoyed what approached a monopoly south of the Mason-Dixon line. It is still un-

known whether W. B. Smith & Co. or its successor shared in the Methodist Book Concern's war-time profits, but one point is very clear: the *McGuffeys'* pre-war market was not only preserved but considerably expanded. And as the Federal Army occupied additional portions of the South, orders flowed into Cincinnati for new supplies of *Readers*. The Methodists, we now see, had helped to provide the textbooks of a Presbyterian minister the market domination and moral influence they were to enjoy for the rest of the century.

By the end of the Civil War, W. B. Smith had retired and the publishers of the *McGuffeys* had changed imprints again. From the original Truman & Smith in 1836 (W. B. Smith & Co. after 1843), the firm's name changed in 1863 to Sargent, Wilson, and Hinkle. That imprint was succeeded in 1868 by Wilson, Hinkle and Company; in 1877 by Van Antwerp, Bragg and Company; and finally in 1890 by The American Book Company. Regardless of the publishing imprint, however, the aggressive and shrewd promotion of the *Readers* begun by W. B. Smith remained a constant. There were always new textbooks coming out, but none could supplant the *McGuffeys*. Charges were made by competitors that agents promoting the *Eclectic Readers* bribed school board members, offered special introductory rates, and instigated ceremonial book-burnings of the texts they replaced. And there is enough evidence to indicate that some of these charges were probably true. Such practices were evidently considered common in the late 19th century, however, and the *McGuffey Readers* salesmen could well afford to laugh when disgruntled competitors assigned Van Antwerp, Bragg and Company the dubious label of "*Van Ante-up, Grabb and Company.*"

For these reasons, then, as well as for their merits, the *McGuffey Readers* flourished magnificently throughout the 19th century, with revised editions appearing only as necessary to hold the market. Although both William and Alexander McGuffey were offered near-token consulting roles in the early revisions, the *Readers* now belonged to the publishers, and most of the editorial revisions were carried out by their assignees. The people who actually decided the contents were such now-forgotten figures as Dr. Timothy S. Pinneo, Daniel G. Mason, Obed J. Wilson, Henry H. Vail, and others. (And after Obed J. Wilson became a partner in the firm, he let his wife revise the 1863 edition of the *First Reader*, inserting the names of her favorite nephews and nieces in many of the lessons.) The books still carried the name of McGuffey, but they were now the product of many hands . . . in many respects an institution in themselves.

THE ECLECTIC SERIES.

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LESSON XXV.



|         |         |           |            |
|---------|---------|-----------|------------|
| piece   | fel'low | prick'ed  | naught'y   |
| tricks  | roar'ed | laugh'ed  | grin'ning  |
| ly'ing  | mon'ey  | rub'bing  | stretch'ed |
| a-rose' | howl'ed | knuck'les | heart'i-ly |
| serv'ed | wag'ged | watch'ing | pun'ish-ed |

THE CRUEL BOY PUNISHED.

1. AN idle boy was one day sitting on the steps of a door, with a stick in one hand, and a piece of bread and butter in the other. As he was eating his bread, he saw a dog lying near him, and called out, "Come here, fellow!"

The *McGuffey Eclectic Readers* began to lose their dominant market control after World War I, and support for their use continued to erode during the 1920s. It was at this time that McGuffey Alumni Societies began to form across the midwestern states, motivated by both nostalgia and some sincere reservations about the progressive textbooks that were supplanting the *McGuffeys*. Another intangible element was involved in these societies, too—a rather fierce pride in the accomplishments of the *McGuffey* graduates that probably also included resentment of the exclusive clubs like those for Harvard, Yale, or Princeton men. Ultimately many of these groups combined in 1935 into the Federated McGuffey Societies of America, which still meets annually in Oxford, Ohio—near the brick home McGuffey built in 1833. That home itself has become the McGuffey Museum, housing the most complete collection of the *Readers* extant, along with an impressive collection of other 19th-century textbooks and McGuffey memorabilia.

The McGuffey heritage lives on in other places, too—with buildings carrying the name at both Ohio University and the University of Virginia, as well as at Miami University; and McGuffey streets, lanes, drives, and avenues abound throughout the American heartland. The log cabin in which W. H. McGuffey was born in Washington County, Pennsylvania, now stands restored in Henry Ford's Greenfield Village in Dearborn, Michigan; and Ford—despite his famous declaration that "history is bunk"—also purchased the McGuffey family home near Youngstown, Ohio, and used the materials to build a McGuffey schoolhouse in Greenfield Village. An enthusiastic supporter of the McGuffey Societies during the 1920s and 1930s, Ford joined with such luminaries of the time as Hamlin Garland, Mark Sullivan, James M. Cox, and John Studebaker to lobby for continued use of the *Eclectic Readers* in American schools.

The *McGuffey Readers* are clearly of value today if for no other reason than their symbolic importance as curious historical artifacts. In many respects they offer a fascinating survey of American 19th-century life and values (with a few curious historical omissions, such as the glamour of the river steamboats and the California gold rush). But their legacy is much more significant than this, even if harder to measure. Wielding an influence second only to that of the Bible, they played a major role in establishing the moral, social, and literary values of several generations. In so doing, the *McGuffey Eclectic Readers* served as a major force in shaping the present consciousness of what we now call Middle America. 🍷

6. "With all my heart," said George. He thought it would be fine fun to throw it down, and make her believe that she had let it fall.



7. "Come here. Stand very still, and when I have lifted the pitcher, be sure that you take hold of the handle."

8. "Thank you," said the little girl. "My arm is ready to drop off. I have been a great way, and my little brothers and sisters can have no dinner till I get home."

9. "Very well," said George. "Now then, stand still." So saying, the moment he had placed the pitcher on her head, he took care to let go, before she could take hold of it.



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